

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

DISASTER PLAN

2020-2021

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Section 1.

Introductory Materials

Statement of Approval

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families' Disaster Plan is approved by the Office of the Chief of Staff and by the Office of the Commissioner.

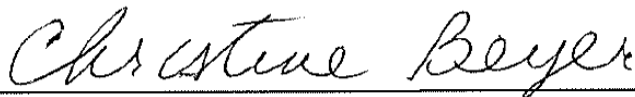
This plan supersedes any prior emergency response plans.



Doris N. Windle
Chief of Staff
New Jersey Department of Children and Families

6/15/2020

Date



Christine Norbut Beyer, M.S.W.
Commissioner
New Jersey Department of Children and Families

6/29/20

Date

Record of Distribution (Internal)

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families' Disaster Plan will be distributed to all DCF Executive and Senior Managers as listed below:

_____ Commissioner

_____ Chief of Staff

_____ Deputy Commissioner, Operations

_____ Deputy Commissioner, Policy, Legal Affairs and Compliance

_____ Assistant Commissioner, Children's System of Care

_____ Assistant Commissioner, Policy and Regulatory Affairs

_____ Assistant Commissioner, Child Protection and Permanency

_____ Assistant Commissioner, Family & Community Partnerships

_____ Assistant Commissioner, Human Resources

_____ Director, Division on Women

_____ Executive Director, Office of Adolescent Services

_____ Director, Communications

_____ Chief, Public Affairs

_____ Chief Financial Officer

_____ Director, Office of Information Technology

_____ Director, Office of Emergency Management

_____ Director, Office of Facilities Management, Support Services and Safety and Security Operations

_____ Administrator, State Central Registry

_____ Director, Clinical Services

_____ Director, Office of Strategic Development

_____ Executive Director, Office of Family Voice

Record of Distribution (External)

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families' Disaster Plan will be distributed externally to the following persons/agencies:

_____ Office of the Commissioner, NJ Department of Human Services (NJDHS)

_____ Office of the Commissioner, NJ Department of Health (NJDOH)

_____ NJ Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM)

_____ NJ Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness (OHSP)

_____ NJDHS-DMHAS Director, Disaster and Terrorism Branch

_____ American Red Cross, New Jersey Region

_____ Salvation Army, New Jersey Division

_____ NJ 2-1-1

_____ ACF Region II

Record of Changes

The following table will record all changes to the Department of Children and Families' Disaster Plan after approval. These changes will be incorporated into the next revision of this plan.

<u>Changes Made By:</u>	<u>Page number</u>	<u>Date</u>
DCF OEM	Addition of COOP plan annex	January 2012
DCF OEM	9	6/5/08
DCF OEM Asst. Director	4, 5	4/7/09
DCF OEM Asst. Director	1, 8, 9, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28	4/13, 14, 15, 16/ 09.1/2012
DCF OEM Asst. Director	1, 2, 8, 11, 15, 24, 25, 28	8/2/2012
DCF OEM	10, 15, 16, 26	7/24/13
DCF OEM	7, 11, 20, 21, 27	2/7/14
DCF OEM	20, 25, 26	5/16/2014
DCF OEM	9, 16, 17, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32	4/22/2019
DCF OEM	7, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 37	April and May 2020

Section 2.

Executive Summary

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (DCF) was established by legislation July 1, 2006. DCF maintains approximately 67 work sites around the state. The Department is staffed by more than 6,600 employees and provides services to nearly 100,000 child and adult consumers each month.

The need for formal emergency planning and practice in anticipation of possible critical events in a system this size is clear. Evacuation centers, transportation, education, staffing, and medical care are all services required during and post-crisis. The need to practice drills for potential emergencies is necessary. In addition, post Hurricanes Katrina, Super Storm Sandy, and current COVID-19 response efforts, reinforce that comprehensive emergency preparedness plans are essential to ensure the safety and protection of the children, youth, women and families served by the department.

The DCF Disaster Plan, based on the National Response Framework model, emphasizes a comprehensive collaborative response following a disaster. The plan includes the coordination and on-going provision of DCF services and continuity of business operations. The DCF Office of Emergency Management has initiated and established connections with the NJ Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness (OHSP), the NJ Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM), the NJ Department of Health (NJDOH), the NJ Department of Human Services (NJDHS) and other state and non-state department entities to facilitate coordination.

The process for revising this plan involved entities from all DCF components. Utilizing the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) with an all hazards approach, the plan requires the integration of the following four critical disaster cycle elements: (1) protection and preparedness, (2) response, (3) recovery, and (4) mitigation.

Further planning efforts will be coordinated with federal, state, county and local emergency management entities. Essential functions and notification and activation procedures are identified. Activation of this plan may be for a localized event (one jurisdiction), regional (multiple NJ counties), statewide, multi-state or even national catastrophic disaster.

The disaster plan, and more specifically the DCF Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), clearly delineates the delegations of authority, order of succession and the assignment of responsibility in the event of an emergency. The COOP identifies the essential functions of the DCF as well as the essential employees that will sustain those functions thus ensuring adherence to planned activities in a coordinated manner to minimize disruption of operations. As a part of plan implementation, all DCF entities will participate in on-going training, drills and exercises.

This plan is intended to be a fluid, ever-changing document subject to bi-annual review and revision based on identified areas requiring improvement and supplemented by guidance prepared and issued by the Commissioner or designees as needed. The DCF Office of Emergency Management will coordinate updates and maintain the plan and documents.

Section 3.

Mission Statement

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families is the state's designated family support agency of 6,600 staff focused on and committed to assisting and empowering residents to be safe, healthy and connected through evidence-based, outcome-oriented, family-focused programs and services, provided through work-practices that incorporate racial equity, healing centered actions, family voice, collaborative safety strategies and a protective factors framework, with values that reflect collaboration, equity and integrity.

The mission of the Department of Children & Families Disaster Plan is to ensure the resilience of that holistic system by providing a framework for organizational response to emergencies encompassing all hazards. By providing for an organized, efficient response to all conceivable hazards, the plan allows DCF to confidently serve New Jersey's children, youth, women and families.

The goals of the plan are as follows:

To provide structure to the efforts of DCF's varied components—including the Children's System of Care (CSOC), Family and Community Partnerships, Division on Women, Office of Adolescent Services, Office of Quality, Office of Education, the State Central Registry, Child Protection and Permanency, the Office of Training and Professional Development, the Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit, the Office of Licensing and business/fiscal offices—as they work towards a comprehensive model of business continuity.

- To utilize the Incident Command System and be National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant.
- To support the continuous and uninterrupted provision of child protective services, child behavioral health services, services to children and youth with developmental disabilities, services to youth with substance use disorders, support and services to homeless youth, and services to survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence, including shelters.
- To ensure continuity of operations for children and families and anyone who will need supports as a result of an emergency situation.
- To define DCF's role as an NJOEM identified support agency to NJ DHS in its role as the state coordinating agency for ESF #6.¹

Section 4.

¹ Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) are primary mechanisms at the operational level used to organize and provide assistance. ESF#6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing and Human Services coordinates the delivery of mass care, emergency assistance, housing and human services when local response and recovery needs exceed their capabilities.

Purposes

- To enhance emergency management functions, responsibilities, policy and guidance. Development and distribution of disaster specific guidance relative to any new and emergent disasters.
- To support the actions of NJDHS regarding coordination of ESF#6 activities as requested.
- To ensure DCF business continuity and coordination with NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and NJ Office of Emergency Management.
- To provide immediate systematic and coordinated response and subsequent recovery from any unplanned interruption impacting normal standard operating procedures.
- To document strategies, resources and procedures that will be utilized to respond to any interruption of operations.
- To reduce possible impact of emergencies on business continuity/continuity of operations.
- To define assumptions and policies.
- To facilitate cooperative relationships for emergency response at the state, county and local level.
- To ensure the safety, well-being and success of children, youth, families and communities within established NJ OEM protocols, executive orders and state plans.
- To identify, locate and continue availability of services for children under state care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster.
- To respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster; and provide services in those cases.
- To establish an interoperable communications system. Facilitate communication with DCF staff, providers and families, including those who are displaced because of a disaster.
- To protect essential program records and information systems.
- To coordinate services and share information with other states.

Section 5.

Assumptions

The following planning assumptions can be made for DCF emergency response in a disaster:

- As directed in the Federal Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-288), which mandates that state child welfare agencies develop disaster plans.

- As directed in State of NJ Executive Order #5 of 2006 (Governor Jon S. Corzine), DCF is required to cooperate with the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness in response to any incident/disaster.
- As dictated in State of NJ Executive Order #50 of 2005 (Acting Governor Richard J. Codey), all DCF senior staff and other staff members with emergency response responsibility shall have completed the NIMS Awareness Course: National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction.
- DCF will act as a support agency to NJDHS regarding coordination of ESF#6 as requested.
- This plan is to be used to provide direction to the DCF response statewide, regionally or locally depending upon the scope and location of the incident/disaster.
- Incidents are typically managed at the lowest possible geographic, organizational and jurisdictional level.
- Each DCF worksite location shall have a completed site evacuation plan.
- Each DCF functional component shall have a designated order of succession.
- The plan supports the ongoing 24-hour operation of the State Centralized Registry (SCR) and call center. (1-877-NJABUSE)
- The plan supports the ongoing off hour's operation of the DCF Special Response Unit (SPRU) system.
- The plan supports the ongoing 24-hour operation of the State Domestic Violence hotline system.
- The plan supports the emergency provision of education services to all students of the DCF Office of Education.
- Documentation of the occurrence of an incident with the potential to disrupt or impact the functional operation of a DCF component will be completed.
- Emergency notification of implementation of a response to an incident/disaster will be provided.
- Preservation of essential case management records will be provided through the NJ SPIRIT system.
- Provision of emergency mental health services as required and requested as delineated in the Children's System of Care. The provider for current mental health, substance use and DD/ID services will develop and implement a safety plan. The Contracted Systems Administrator is anticipated to remain operational and Mobile Response and Stabilization Services will be dispatched at the discretion of both CSOC and the MRSS provider.
- The plan supports the ongoing operation of all DCF Administrative, Area and Local offices as determined necessary and appropriate and to remain safe, accessible and operational. The plan provides for the use of all DCF facilities state owned and leased, on a flexible and extended schedule.
- The plan provides for the use of flexible and extended work hours, including staggered shifts and alternate worksites, and working remotely with IT support and established work from home policies.
- Agencies contracted, funded by and/or licensed by DCF are valuable partners.

- Volunteer organizations such as FEMA, the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and other agencies are valuable partners, as always, in the event of a disaster.

Section 6.

Disaster Definitions and Hazard Categories

Disaster Definition (FEDERAL)

An occurrence of such severity and magnitude that normally results in deaths, injuries and property damage and that cannot be managed through the routine procedures and resources of government. It requires immediate, coordinated, and effective response by multiple government and private sector organizations to meet human needs and speed recovery. (Federal Emergency Management Agency)

Any hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water, wind-driven water, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, drought, fire, explosion, or other catastrophe, natural or man-made, in any part of the United States that, in the determination of the President, causes a large-scale community incident and damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant (under the Stafford Act), major disaster assistance, above and beyond emergency services by the Federal government, to supplement the efforts and resources of States, local governments and disaster relief organizations.

Disasters (hazards) can be categorized as natural, accidental, and manmade. Natural disasters can include hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes, certain categories of fires,

earthquakes, and severe storms and pandemics. Accidental disasters can include chemical spills, gas explosions, airplane crashes, automobile or boating accidents. Manmade disasters can include war, assault, sabotage, hostage situations, arson, murder, economic collapse/crisis, and acts of terrorism that can be chemical, biological, nuclear/radiological, explosive, cyber, and may occur concurrently.

Although community incidents may be insufficient in scope or magnitude to activate a presidential declaration, they may still impact the affected community. A community incident damages the bonds linking people together and impairs the prevailing sense of community. This type of event strikes at the vulnerabilities of people that are going about their normal routines. An example of a community incident, that does not trigger a disaster declaration, could be a shooting in a public facility.

Disaster Definition (STATE)

The State of New Jersey defines a disaster as a community incident in New Jersey that in the determination of the Governor causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude, to warrant activation of the State Emergency Operations Plan.

An event is considered traumatic if it is so stressful to the people affected that, if the crisis was left unresolved, ongoing psychological disturbance would impair emotional, social, physical or vocational functioning.

The crisis is caused by the stresses of either a natural, accidental or manmade emergency/disaster the scope, nature and unexpectedness of which overwhelms normal defenses, social supports and sense of security.

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) is a United States federal law designed to bring an orderly and systematic means of federal natural disaster assistance for state and local governments in carrying out their responsibilities to aid citizens. It created the system in place today by which a presidential disaster declaration of an emergency triggers financial and physical assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Act gives FEMA the responsibility for coordinating government-wide relief efforts.

To reduce the effect of emergency/disaster related stress on individuals, appropriate anticipatory guidance and crisis counseling must be provided as soon as possible following the event. Crisis counseling services should also be coordinated with the services of the first line public and private agencies responsible for the health and safety of New Jersey's citizens.

Additional Hazard-Specific Categories:

All of the following categories would be assessed in light of specific events of medium or high probability in the state. These events would vary from region to region:

- Air transportation incidents and serious transportation accidents
- Civil Disturbances/Contractual Disputes
- Coastal hazards
- Communicable Disease Outbreaks/Epidemics
- Drought
- Earthquake
- Economic collapse/crisis
- Fires and Explosions (structural, wildfires)
- Floods and flash floods (coastal inland)
- Forest fires and wildfires
- Hailstorms
- Hurricanes and Nor Easterns
- Hazardous materials (any release of)
- Heat waves
- Nuclear power plant incidents
- Operational issues including government shutdown
- Technological Emergencies/Manmade accidents
- Terrorism
- Tornadoes and severe thunderstorms
- Unexpected utility failures
- Winter storms
- Structural collapses
- Active Shooter/Active Assailant
- Bomb Threats
- Pandemics

Categories of need would be examined in the case less probable but potentially more catastrophic events, such as the effects of bioterrorism or nuclear attack.

Terrorism:

Terrorism is the unlawful use of force or violence against people or property to intimidate a government or civilian population in the furthering of political or social objectives. The State of New Jersey is vulnerable to the effects of terrorist events in the form of chemical, biological, nuclear or cyber-attack, weapons and firearms, fusion, weapons of mass destruction and animal disease. Potential targets include schools, shopping centers, healthcare facilities, airports, nuclear power plants, transportation infrastructure, metro chemicals, pharmaceuticals and major public events of various venues.

Intentional contamination is also a factor via intentional contamination of agriculture and livestock by Foreign Animal Diseases (FAD's) The NJ Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) has noted potential terrorist targets in the State Emergency Operations Plan and the State's Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)

document. The NJOEM has also identified potential areas for the release of hazardous materials and biological agents. The priority of securing the safety of the children and families we serve will be inherent in protecting our critical infrastructure, key resources and assets. This will be accomplished by the establishment and maintenance of effective communication and coordination between DCF and the various state and private partners with the goal of a reduction in vulnerability and rapid recovery from a disaster. DCF/OEM will follow all command protocols and procedures designated by the NJ OEM in the event of a terrorist event.

Section 7.

DCF Organization and Operations

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) was created by legislation in July 2006 as the primary state Department for the provision and oversight of services to children and families, including child protection and permanency services, abuse and neglect prevention and strengthening family programs, child behavioral health, substance use disorder and developmental disability services, services to displaced homemakers and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and the licensing of child care centers, youth residential programs, partial care programs and adoption agencies. The Department is staffed by more than 6,700 employees and provides services to nearly 100,000 child and adult clients each month.

DCF is composed of four Divisions—the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P), the Division of Children’s System of Care (CSOC), the Division of Family and Community Partnerships (FCP), the Division on Women (DOW)—and many non-division administrative offices with oversight for areas such as Administration and Management, Family Voice, Information Technology, Adolescent Services, Child and Family Health, Education, Legal and Legislative Affairs, Advocacy, Training and Professional Development, Communications, and Licensing.

DCF maintains a 24 hour a day call center, the State Centralized Registry (SCR) for the reporting of allegations of child abuse and neglect and contracts, licenses and/or funds a variety of child placement and child and family support services through many private agencies within this state and others. Additionally, SCR has been established as the “hub” for DCF internal communications in the event of a disaster. All providers have been advised to contact SCR in the event of a disaster to advise of moves of children under CP&P supervision, movement of Domestic Violence programs, any issues pertaining to CSOC funded programs, and licensed childcare providers to notify DCF if they close or relocate.

Section 8.

Essential Services and Priorities During a Disaster

DCF's primary focus in the event of any declared disaster will be the preservation of its capability to respond to emergency situations (i.e. allegations of ongoing child abuse or neglect) and the continuation of services to clients, with a primary focus on children in out of home placement and children or adults requiring essential services to assist residents in being safe, healthy and connected.

During a declared disaster, DCF will focus on the continuation of the following operations and services:

1. Child Protection response, including operation of the 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline for the reporting of child abuse and neglect allegations
2. Operation of the Domestic Violence Hotline
3. Monitoring of and support to children placed by CP&P in resource homes, residential placement settings or treatment programs, including worker visits and/or other authorized contact with youth and families
4. The establishment of alternate non-congregate care settings as necessary to include alternate relocation sites.
5. The uninterrupted provision of behavioral health, substance use disorder, and developmental disability services to CSOC clients.
6. The continuous operation of domestic violence shelters and other shelter facilities operated or licensed by DCF or a contracted provider
7. The evacuation or relocation of any facility or home providing care or support to DCF clients, if warranted
8. Provision of services to homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness
9. Preservation of communications systems to ensure ready communication between providers, parents, children and DCF officials.
10. Preservation of IT infrastructure and systems of record, and confidentiality of the same.
11. IT supports to enable continuity of operations and ensure mission essential functions can continue from remote locations.

Child protection and permanency services necessitated by or otherwise arising from the occurrence of a declared disaster will be the responsibility of CP&P. CP&P's capability to respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster; and provide services in those cases will be met by working cooperatively with the NJ Office of Emergency Management, the NJ Office of Homeland Security and other state departments, Divisions, Bureaus and offices. It will also be carried out in cooperation with and assisted by a variety of county and local offices of emergency response and many private and volunteer human services and emergency response agencies. DCF is identified as a support agency to NJDHS regarding the coordination of ESF#6 if necessary.

Coordination with other state and federal entities will be undertaken by the DCF Office of Emergency Management.

Section 9.

Phases of DCF Disaster Planning and Response

DCF's disaster response can be broken into four distinct phases:

1. The Protection and Preparedness Phase, which will include identification of essential functions, assessment, plan development and participation in exercises and drills.
2. The Response Phase, which will involve activation of the DCF emergency notification protocol as well as briefing, assignment and deployment of staff. Responses may involve:
 - the provision of assistance to local emergency response entities, support of agencies contracted to or licensed by DCF
 - accessing disaster mental health services
 - coordination of the movement of children or families that are displaced
 - re-deployment of staff and/or obtaining additional staff to address staffing shortages and absenteeism;
 - utilization of alternate work sites and/or flexibility/expansion of work hours
 - utilization of residential facilities
 - acquisition and logistics of alternate sites with procurement of necessary supports
 - identifying gaps and strategies for needed resources
 - ensuring any disaster related guidance and resources are provided to staff and community providers, families, childcare providers.
 - submission of resource requests via NJOEM or other avenues to support health and life safety. Assist in the procurement and distribution of PPE or other equipment and supplies needed during a pandemic or other emergency event
 - monitoring via daily updates and data analysis to maintain situational awareness and provide operational status during the disaster
 - monitoring of overall COOP levels of residential facilities to ensure continuity of operations and identify when to enact mass care protocols
 - responding to unmet needs of children and families to ensure safety and well-being
3. The Recovery Phase, which will initiate upon the start of DCF's return to normal operations. Continued access to disaster mental health services or a move to the provision of long-term treatment services may be required. If a Presidential Declaration including Public Assistance is made, and DCF facilities were impacted,

DCF's OEM will lead the processing of the Department's reimbursement request in coordination with the NJ Office of Emergency Management – Recovery Bureau.

4. The Mitigation Phase, which will initiate upon the end of the Recovery Phase. An evaluation of protection, preparedness, response and recovery activities will be completed during this phase of the process – and recommendations will be made for actions and changes in protocols/practices to help reduce the impact of future incidents.

Planning and Preparedness Phase

The planning and preparedness phase is critical to ensure the capability exists to continue essential functions and operations across a variety of potential emergencies or disasters. DCF OEM is responsible to assist in the development of unit or office specific plans to include – evaluation, compilation, technical assistance, and approval. These plans will be incorporated into the DCF overall plan. Preparedness objectives are as follows:

- Continued performance of mission essential functions and operations.
- The protection and preservation of essential program records and IT systems/information.
- Minimizing operational disruption.
- Minimizing the damage and loss of resources.
- Mitigating the effects of the emergency.
- Minimizing the crisis response time.
- Efficient plan activation and continuity of operations.

The protection and preparedness phase encompasses the time frame before a disaster and such response preparedness will start as early as notifications are received. Preparedness activities include:

- Plan development.
- Identification of alternate work sites and facilities support.
- Establishment of designations of authority and orders of succession.
- Establishing interoperable communications.
- Identifying and designating emergency relocation personnel.
- Ensuring on-going staff training in disaster preparedness.
- Developing and updating resource inventory and directory.
- Completing a comprehensive review of plan with all staff
- Annual update and revisions of the plan. Ensure updated COOP annexes specific to the disaster. Update of mission essential functions.
- Educating all staff as to the need for personal preparedness.
- Establishment of memorandums of understanding and mutual aid agreements.
- Participation in trainings, exercises, drills, testing of plans.
- Communications preparedness messaging (Portal, DCF Emergency Hotline)

Response Phase

Response actions will be taken immediately before, during or after an emergency occurs to ensure effective maintenance of essential functions. Specific response activities based upon the function referenced will be identified as part of a unit, facility, office or agency specific disaster response plan as well as those activities identified for the DCF in its overall Disaster Plan. DCF activities will be delineated in the Organization and Assignment of Responsibility portion of this plan. Actions to be taken by entities participating in the DCF response will be delineated in plans developed by those entities, some of which may be appended to this plan.

Response activities include:

- Development of an Action Plan outlining the flow of activation and how the Department would continue to operate.
- Notification and activation.
- Confirming or establishing communication capabilities and test communication links.
- Assessment of workforce and workplace availability.
- Managing and/or coordinating the response.
- Managing Emergency Support Function #6 support agency responsibility.
- Deployment of personnel. Planning and addressing any reductions in workforce.
- Initiation of alternate facility process, as needed and provision of supports and any physical plant requirements
- Deploying transportation resources, as needed.
- Implementing internal/external communications protocol.
- Evaluating performance and back up of IT systems.
- Documentation of response actions taken.
- Documenting response costs. Documenting for Federal reimbursement (include picture documentation)
- Implementing public information protocol.
- Implementing staff support protocols.
- Work in conjunction with State and Federal partners on the establishment of new programs in response to identified gaps.

Recovery and Mitigation Phase

Integration of response and recovery activity is the desired status as recovery from an event begins. Implementation of a comprehensive disaster recovery and business resumption strategy will initiate a return to minimum operating standards. Additional activities will be identified that can hasten return to normal and encourage improved levels of operations. Federal reimbursement processes will be started, if applicable. Establishment of short and long-term recovery goals and objectives must be accomplished.

Short-term recovery goals may include:

- Continued provision of essential services to all affected.
- Establishing priorities for reinstatement of various systems and operations.
- Establishing timeframes for acceptable reinstatement of system and operational levels.
- Identification of resources necessary to restore operations.
- Continuing established communication and staff support protocols.
- Application for Federal assistance via Federal grants.
- Participation in any newly developed programs relative to response.

Long-term recovery goals may include:

- Strategic planning and mitigation including how we may change/adapt our processes and operations.
- Management and coordination of recovery activities.
- Assessing response and recovery costs.
- Developing and implementing mitigation goals/activities.
- Debriefing and capturing lessons learned.
- Staff recognition.
- Building new systems with improved response and strengthened infrastructure.

Mitigation actions reduce or eliminate long-term risk to DCF staff, children, families, facilities and environment from all hazards with a goal of maximized disaster resistance. DCF OEM will take proactive measures to identify, develop, implement and evaluate strategies to reduce Department wide vulnerability to all hazards by organizing resources, assessing risks, developing a mitigation plan, implementing the plan and monitoring progress.

Section 10.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

Administration

The DCF table of organization reflects a direct reporting relationship between the Office of the Commissioner and the following components: the Office of the Chief of Staff; the Deputy Commissioner - Operations; the Assistant Commissioner of Child Protection & Permanency; the Executive Director of Adolescent Services; the Assistant Commissioner of Children's System of Care; the Assistant Commissioner of Family & Community Partnerships; the Director of the Division on Women; the Director of Communications and Chief of Public Affairs; and, the Deputy Commissioner – Policy, Legal Affairs and Compliance. In the event of an emergency requiring activation of the State EOC, this leadership team will organize and respond from the Commissioner's conference room on the 7th floor, 50 East State Street or via conference calls as needed. Unless specifically called to the State EOC, the Commissioner will lead efforts to maintain essential functions of the DCF and will be provided ongoing information relative to response efforts and any NJOEM requirements of the DCF. Information and resource requests will be provided to and from the DCF/OEM personnel assigned to the State EOC.

Residential Services

Agency Providers: Disaster preparedness, response and recovery for agency operated residential programs licensed, contracted and/or funded by DCF will be provided as outlined in the agency wide emergency response plan and agency site specific emergency response plans in cooperation with the DCF and county and local emergency response entities as per contract requirements.

Resource Family Homes: Disaster preparedness, response and recovery for DCF Resource Family Homes will be provided in accordance with the DCF Manual of Requirements for Resource Family Parents in cooperation with county and local emergency response entities. It will further be carried out as indicated in the DCF Resource Family Disaster Plan completed and maintained by the Resource Family Home.

Any event impacting a large area of the state and requiring the movement of large numbers of children under the care and supervision of the DCF will result in a DCF system wide assessment to determine the existence of any vacant residential beds that may be utilized in the disaster response effort. Actions will be disaster specific for specific considerations. Alternate sites may need to be established and utilized. In the event of a disaster, such as a pandemic, consideration for issues like social distancing will need to be a factor. An event of this size and scope may also see DCF active in its role as a support agency to NJDHS for ESF#6.

All child residents of resource family homes shall receive age appropriate instruction in how to evacuate the home safely in the event of fire or other emergency.

It is the responsibility of the caregivers with whom a child resides at the time of an event to care for that child until such time as an appropriate alternate site and /or caregiver(s) are identified. It is also the caregiver's responsibility to assure that each child is provided with documentation of identity as well as any medical information, school records, immunization records, court orders and physician and agency contact information, if available. If it becomes necessary to transfer care of a child, it is imperative that the child continue to receive food, clothing, medication (if needed) and emotional support and supervision.

Since Superstorm Sandy hit New Jersey in 2012, DCF has provided funding so that its Domestic Violence shelters and all levels of children's residential services can purchase alternate energy sources (generators) allowing these populations to "shelter in place" versus evacuate to a mass care shelter. If this is not possible, the Department has to approve relocation to a hotel or corporate office. DCF will work in conjunction with any established non-congregate care hotel programs implemented. This is done in order to keep particularly at-risk citizens out of mass care shelters. However, if the size, nature or location of an event is significant enough that any residential facility cannot continue to serve the children residing there, on site, the facility caregiver should immediately implement a use of alternate facility process. Alternate facility process for residential services can include the following choices of a course of action:

- Use of emergency shelters.
- Use of an alternate site vacancy within the same agency.
- Use of an alternate site vacancy, outside the current agency.
- Use of family or relative care giver, DCF approved.
- Resource family re-location.
- Use of alternate resource family.
- Temporary, emergency hotel residence.

It is incumbent upon the caregiver to communicate any change in location of residence to the DCF through SCR. It is the obligation of the caregiver to seek out information pertaining to DCF Operations during the tenure of the event via the DCF webpage, DCF correspondence, digital or social media and newspapers.

Any information received relative to a change in residence for a child receiving services from DCF will be entered into the State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS/NJSPIRIT) per DCF/CP&P protocol as soon as possible.

Should the use of emergency shelter be the only available alternative to residential services for any child or family receiving services from the DCF, it will seek to provide support services to these individuals as appropriate and available for the duration of the event or until alternate residential accommodations can be provided.

For children receiving residential services outside the state of NJ but funded by DCF, disaster response, if needed, will be provided through the national Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).

Education Services

The Office of Education (OOE) provides intensive 12-month educational services to children and young adults ages three through 21. These services are provided at 15 DCF Regional Schools. Disaster preparedness, response and recovery will be provided based upon the Manual of Regional School Safety Plans and the individual school safety plan developed at each campus. All related activities will be conducted in cooperation with the DCF Office of Emergency Management and County and local emergency response entities.

Each of the regional schools, as part of preparedness and planning, will identify a school safety team. Each of the regional schools will also identify an alternate location to their students in the event of a short-term event that requires the use of an alternate facility process. Incidents that result in a facility being unavailable for use for any extended period of time will require the implementation of alternate facility process. Alternate facility process for the DCF Office of Education can include the following:

- Use of an alternate DCF/OOE facility.
- Use of a NJ DHS facility based upon memorandum of understanding.
- Use of an alternate private facility based upon lease agreement.

The DCF OOE maintains a fleet of 159 vehicles, of which 155 vehicles are school buses, a portion of which are parked at various OOE campuses. The OOE also employs a staff of part-time CDL drivers at each campus. Utilization of this transportation resource for disaster response will be as indicated in the transportation service portion of this plan.

Human Resource Services

The DCF Office of Human Resources DCF/OHR will be an important provider of essential services in all areas of disaster preparedness, response and recovery. The maintenance of an experienced, trained and informed workforce is a key component of DCF's level of preparedness. Provisions for the hiring of new employees and the training of all employees in the event of a disaster will be as designated in DCF/OHR policy and procedure.

Provision for the maintenance of timekeeping and payroll services will be as indicated in DCF/OHR policy and procedure. The DCF/OHR will work cooperatively with the NJ Civil Service Commission and NJ Department of the Treasury in pursuit of these goals.

The Office of Human Resources will partner with the DCF/OEM and the DCF Office of Communications to provide for accurate and timely workforce notification relative to any disaster and as indicated in the DCF Emergency Notification Protocol.

The DCF/OHR will coordinate with the DCF/OEM and designated employee bargaining units on the development of any memorandums of understanding, side letters of agreement or concessions required by the establishment or alternate work sites, work rules or flexible and extended work hours necessitated by any event or occurrence.

DCF/OEM, DCF/OHR and the DCF Office of Training and Professional Development have cooperated in the development and implementation of a disaster protection, preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation curriculum. This curriculum will include elements of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Incident Command System (ICS) and other information critical to and current in the field of emergency management.

DCF/OEM will identify, coordinate and track the completion of all federal and state required disaster preparedness training for those employees designated.

The DCF/OEM will provide information and otherwise encourage the personal preparation of all DCF employees for disaster or disaster related situations. The DCF/OEM recognizes the reality that a personally prepared workforce will be better equipped to assist in the DCF response to any disaster if they themselves and those close to them are prepared. In that regard the DCF has developed and implemented policy, procedures and staff outreach, which will assist in the maintenance of a “disaster ready” workforce.

Office of Emergency Management Services

The DCF/OEM under the supervision and direction of the DCF Director of Facilities will serve in the role of DCF liaison to the NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, the NJ Office of Emergency Management, the Domestic Security Preparedness Task Force, the Domestic Security Preparedness Planning Group, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Health and Human Services – Agency for Children and Families, and to all other State Departments as well as county, local and agency offices of emergency management. DCF/OEM will assume this role for the purpose of assisting in guiding protection, preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation activities and resources relative to the provision of all child protection and welfare services either locally or on a statewide basis.

DCF/OEM is responsible for DCF disaster plan development, implementation, training and revision. DCF/OEM will participate in regular drills and exercises of various type and size to ensure an appropriate level of readiness. DCF/OEM works in conjunction with DCF Security Advisors to conduct and evaluate drills and exercises for DCF offices.

Child Protection and Permanency Services (CP&P)

The provision of child protection and welfare services requires the continuity of operations of the DCF State Central Registry (SCR) Child Abuse Hotline, the CP&P Area and CP&P Local offices and the Institutional Abuse Investigations Unit. Office, unit and/or building specific plans for the continuity of operations are in place at each work location. These plans specify contact persons, site coordinators, relocation coordinators, alternate worksites, numbers of employees and other information critical to maintaining the provision of these essential services to the children and families of the State of New Jersey.

DCF contracts with the Rutgers University Francois-Xavier School of Nursing for the Child Health Unit Program, which provides health care case management for all children in out of home placement. Child Health Unit (CHU) nurses in every Child Welfare office in New Jersey case manage the health care needs of all children who come into out-of-home care. The nurses work closely with resource parents, facilitating access to care, and providing health education and anticipatory guidance to ensure that the resource parent is able to meet the needs of the child, including provisions for emergency preparedness. The nurses identify specific healthcare needs and educate the resource parents on the importance of being prepared. Anticipatory guidance on emergency preparedness is centered around a tool that directs resource parents to make a plan that includes a meeting location, a contact person, and important phone numbers. If a child or family member has a special need or physical limitation, the tool reminds them to register with the local police, fire or the office of emergency management. Furthermore, the tool suggests supplies to place in an emergency kit and includes a section to list all health information about children in their care in one place. Additionally, the brochure has tips for taking care of emotional needs and other sites to access help as resource parents prepare for emergency. Anticipatory guidance on Emergency Preparedness is reviewed with resource parents at each nursing home visit, with new resource parents if a child moves to another placement, and with caregivers upon reunification or adoption. The nurse documents in New Jersey's information system education provided and durable medical equipment (DME) needs. Documentation of DME information allows DCF easy access to identify children that are using medical equipment that needs power, such as, ventilators, CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure), apnea monitors, and feeding pumps. Also, if there is a storm forecasted, the nurses will call resource parents to reassess their readiness with food, formula, water, medications and a back-up plan for electronically powered medical equipment.

Children's System of Care Services (CSOC)

The DCF recognizes the critical need for the ongoing provision of behavioral health, substance use and developmental disability services to children and youth. Services provided to individuals under the auspices of CSOC are provided by contracted providers, and the need for plans to ensure the continuity of those services will be included in associated contracts and memoranda of agreement.

The state's contracted system administrator will ensure that systems are in place to allow for the preservation of records and continuation of payment to service providers.

Sexual Assault Services and Domestic Violence Shelters and Services

The occurrence of a declared disaster does not eliminate the need for domestic violence shelters or services, or sexual assault services provided through the Division on Women. Contracted providers and grant recipients will ensure that continuity of operations and relocation plans are in place.

Section 11.

Administration, Logistics and Legal

Any and all agreements and understandings entered into for the purchase, lease or otherwise use of equipment and/or services will be in accordance with the provisions of state law. The DCF will establish and adhere to the administrative controls necessary to manage expenditure of funds relative to disaster preparedness, response and recovery. DCF will provide for accountability and justification for all disaster related expenditures. DCF will provide for the timely submission of any documentation required to obtain federal reimbursement when available and in accordance with established federal program guidelines.

The DCF will adhere to all federal, state and department specific reporting guidelines and requirements in the event of any disaster. Back up and preservation of essential program (client) records and case files is provided for in the State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS/NJSPIRIT).

The information and technology (IT) infrastructure are key elements to the DCF operations. It is of the utmost importance that identified critical information systems are maintained and backed up. Information includes files, documents, computer software and databases required to carry out mission essential functions. IT shall provide the capability to back-up and restore both file and application servers in the event of an emergency.

IT employs offsite storage of all back-up tapes and utilizes the State of NJ Office of Information Technology hub facility for NJ Spirit. In the event of total destruction or loss of access to the 50 East State Street building, key personnel could be provided remote access to the server and technical support. NJSPIRIT disaster recovery is located at a secured off-site location. Phone equipment and back-up tapes are located at 50 East State Street, Trenton, NJ.

Section 12.

Plan Development and Maintenance

The DCF/OEM, as directed by the Director of Facilities, has the overall responsibility for planning and management of its resources as necessary in assuring emergency preparedness, response and recovery. Each functional component of DCF shares in the responsibility for development and maintenance of appropriate planning documents that address responsibilities assigned in the department plan.

The DCF/OEM will maintain and update the DCF Disaster Plan as required. Functional components within the DCF may recommend changes and will provide information relative to capability changes and/or emerging needs that may impact their emergency management responsibilities.

DCF functional components have the responsibility for maintaining unit, facility or site-specific plans annexed to the DCF Disaster Plan. This may include the standard operating procedures, notification lists and resource data which ensure a prompt and effective response to emergencies.

The DCF/OEM will coordinate an annual review of the DCF Disaster Plan with functional component representatives of the DCF. The DCF/OEM will oversee all review and revision efforts to assure appropriate update based upon lessons learned during actual occurrences and exercises, and other changes in organization, technology, responsibility and/or capability.

The DCF/OEM will recommend and issue changes to the DCF Disaster Plan as authorized by the DCF Commissioner and DCF Chief of Staff. The DCF/OEM will assure appropriate distribution of the DCF Disaster Plan and all of its functional annexes within the DCF and to other State departments and agencies as appropriate and as recommended by the NJ State Police Office of Emergency Management.

The DCF/OEM will ensure participation in any relevant exercises by one or all functional components of the DCF at least annually. The DCF/OEM and DCF functional components as required will also participate in statewide exercises in emergency response as requested by the NJ State Police Office of Emergency Management. DCF/OEM and DCF Security Advisors will continue the planning and roll-out of lockdown drills, exercises and post-event evaluations for DCF staff.

Section 13.

DCF Direction and Control

In concert with the assumption that emergency response to all incidents is typically best managed at the lowest jurisdictional, organizational or geographic level, DCF will most often serve in a support role relative to the state's overall Emergency Support Function oriented disaster response (excluding DCF's mandated unique Mission Essential Functions). It is only in those incidents that are exclusive to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) that DCF/OEM will take the lead in management of the response.

During the majority of emergency operations, federal, state, county and local emergency responders will remain to the extent possible, under the established management and supervisory control of their parent organizations. Key officials with the responsibility for executing direction and control of multi-agency response and recovery operations within defined areas are identified in local, county and state plans. The coordination of services and sharing of information with other states, as needed, will be coordinated through DCF/OEM at the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC).

DCF will implement plans to maintain essential functions relative to the well-being and success of New Jersey's children and families including child protection and welfare services for the entire state and will coordinate otherwise with the NJ State Police Office of Emergency Management in support of their response to all incidents requiring the activation of the SEOC.

Section 14.

Notification and Activation

DCF emergency notifications of any type and activation of the DCF Disaster Plan in response to any occurrence requiring it will be provided by the DCF/OEM.

Information relative to staff reporting requirements, work location availability and alternate work locations and hours will be posted to the [DCF website](#) and messaged via text, e-mail alerts and/or the 1-855-653-2336 employee hotline.

Use of established phone trees or chains of communication where available and established in operational or geographically defined work units is encouraged.

Section 15.

Resource Management

The goal of effective resource management is to ensure that DCF has the organizational structure and processes to locate, obtain and distribute necessary resources in the event of an emergency. DCF resources would include personnel, professional expertise, facilities, communications equipment, computer hardware and software, training curriculums and facilities; and vehicles. An emergency alert notification contact roster for DCF executive management will be maintained by the DCF OEM. In the event that new equipment is required, DCF would request deployment of emergency equipment from our regular vendors or via the State Emergency Operations Center (via ETeam request).

Access to resources from out of state or provision of resources for an out of state incident will be as defined in the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or thru FEMA via the FEMA Integration Team (FIT) located at the SEOC.

Section 16.

Communications

To the extent permitted by the incident, communications within DCF will continue to utilize existing and operational land line telephones, mobile/cell phones, Smart Phones, and personal or laptop computers. Use of these devices will be contingent on the availability of current network services. The DCF/OEM has also issued GETS/WPS cards to all senior executives (and their backups) for their use in a telecommunications-impacted incident.

The DCF/OEM has also established a DCF emergency radio communications system connecting all DCF worksites by the assignment of portable 800Mhz Motorola radios to each site. The system is tested monthly and is activated in part or in whole when the ability to communicate or to communicate safely via other means is no longer available. The system is an interoperable system which is monitored by the NJ State Police and the NJ Human Services Police Department.

Section 17.

Public Information

The DCF Office of Public Affairs and Communications, Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner, Office of the Governor, and the NJ Office of Emergency Management will coordinate all disaster-related information released to the public, including the communication of child welfare services available to families in disaster-impacted areas. For disasters requiring State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation, information disclosures to the public will be the responsibility of a state-managed Joint Information Center.

In the event that a joint public information center is activated by the State EOC, the DCF Office of Communications will serve as the DCF liaison to that entity as noted in ESF #15 the public information officer would report to the Joint Information Center (JIC).

Section 18.

Transportation

Particular attention must be given to individuals that lack the capacity to provide or otherwise arrange transportation for themselves and for children in their care. In response to this need DCF may look to utilize the fleet of vehicles which it maintains in the most efficient and equitable fashion in response to any event which calls for the movement of children under DCF supervision and to assure continued provision of child protection and welfare services throughout the state.

Facility, local, county or regional events may require the emergency re-allocation of a portion of the DCF fleet to or from an affected area depending upon the nature of the incident. For example, flooding of a particular area may require that a portion of the fleet be relocated to higher ground. A disaster requiring activation of the State Emergency Operations Plan may require the re-allocation of the DCF fleet or portions of it to the NJ State Police Office of Emergency Management.

DCF maintains a fleet of approximately 2,200 vehicles. More than 2,000 of these vehicles directly support child protection, child welfare and adoption services throughout the state. The DCF Office of Education (OOE) utilizes 90 bus/transit vehicles to transport children to the various regional school campuses operated by OOE and other educational programs. The remaining vehicles in the fleet are assigned to units supporting DCF field offices.

Section 19.

Evacuation

The DCF/OEM will ensure that all DCF operated facilities and programs have plans in place for the safe evacuation of staff and children from disaster affected areas to non-affected areas as a component of their facility/home disaster plan. Incorporated in the plans will also be provisions for designated alternate sites and coordination of acceptance at specified sites. Plans will also address the need for the continuation of services at alternate sites. Caregivers are expected to contact DCF with information relative to the location to which they have relocated at the earliest possible date.

Exclusive of emergency evacuation of a facility for a fire or other reason (drill or otherwise), activation of evacuation plans will be triggered locally upon request or direction from local, county, state or Federal Emergency Management authorities. Staff will receive instructions and trainings regarding the evacuation process.

Section 20.

Health and Medical

DCF is working collaboratively with the NJOEM and the NJDOH to improve the state of DCF preparedness as it pertains to health and medical services. Provision of disaster mental health services to families will be as indicated previously in Section 8 of this document and as prescribed by the Children's System of Care. DCF caseworkers and other staff will seek to provide support to those individuals under their care and supervision at a local level and through the existing network of health care professionals in the community. DCF will continue to access the services provided by the Comprehensive Health Evaluations for Children exam sites where services were not impacted or impeded by the event and/or utilize existing emergency protocols for critical care via public health and hospital infrastructure. In the event of a declaration of a state or federal disaster the DCF will seek to provide for medical and health related services to those individuals under its care and supervision at the direction of the NJOEM and/or the NJDOH.

For DCF staff itself, the Department has a confidential peer-to-peer counseling support service – Worker2Worker – coordinated by Rutgers University/University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey/University Behavioral Health Care.

Section 21.

Mass Care

Mass care consists of all activities to provide for the basic needs of people displaced by a disaster. This includes shelter, food, reunification services, first aid, and distribution of emergency relief supplies following a catastrophic event. DCF/OEM will implement procedures for providing or requesting mass care for personnel and children impacted by a disaster or emergency. Any event impacting a large area of the state and requiring the movement of large numbers of children under the care and supervision of the DCF will see implementation of the alternate facility process discussed in the residential services portion of this plan.

Section 22.

Continuity of Operations

The occurrence of a disaster of any size could impede the ability of the DCF to provide essential services to the children of a portion of or the entire state of NJ. In response to this potentiality, the DCF/OEM works with the various DCF organizational units and agencies in the development and maintenance of the Department's Continuity of Operations / Continuity of Government (COOP/COG) plan. Lines of succession in the DCF are outlined in the DCF Orders of Succession as are Delegations of Authority for DCF functional components. There are also DCF school safety plans, CP&P emergency preparedness and response plans and office emergency action plans on file in the DCF/OEM. Lines of succession and delegations of authority for agencies or facilities licensed by, contracted to or funded by DCF must be defined in unit, facility, site or agency specific plans. Emergency action steps and the alternate facility process are delineated in organization and assignment of responsibilities specifically in the various essential services sections. Protection of government resources is addressed in the resource management portion of this plan in section 15. The protection of vital records is described in section 9. Administration, logistics and legal.

As noted above, the DCF OEM has developed a separate COOP/COG Plan and Pandemic Annex to provide guidance in ensuring the execution of mission essential functions critical to the provision of ensuring the safety and well-being of children, youth, families and communities. All plans and guidance documents are intended to be used as a framework for operations and may be revised/updated as needed before, during and after an event.

Section 23.

Glossary of Terms

All Hazards – anything that is potentially dangerous or harmful and often the root cause of an unwanted outcome.

Recovery- The development, coordination and execution of service and site restoration plans for impacted entities and the reconstitution of operations and services. Identify needs and resources, promote restoration of normal operations, incorporate mitigation measures, identify lessons learned and promote resiliency.

Response- all activities that address the short-term direct effects of an incident. Activities can occur immediately before, during or directly after an emergency or disaster. Includes the execution of emergency operation plans to minimize unfavorable outcomes.

Catastrophic incident- any natural or man-made incident including terrorism, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage or disruption severely affecting the infrastructure and operational functions.

Critical infrastructure – Vital systems and assets that the destruction or incapacity of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact of functional operations and service provision.

Evacuation- An organized, supervised dispersal or removal of personnel and children/families from potentially dangerous areas and their reception and care to safe areas.

Hazard mitigation- Actions and activities directed toward eliminating or reducing the risk of disaster occurrence.

Incident- An occurrence or event, natural or man-made that requires an emergency response to protect life or property.

Interoperable communications-The ability of emergency responders to talk to one another via radio and other communication systems and exchange voice/and or data with one another on demand and in real time.